Performance of NREGA

405. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a study "Evaluating performance of National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA)" conducted by National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) and Public Interest foundation (PIF) revealing that the programme has achieved only 50 per cent success and several cases of data manipulated with fudging of muster rolls reported;

(b) whether it is a fact that the new minimum wages, which have been notified were being paid at the earlier dates; and

(c) if so, what is the reaction of Government to above mentioned stinging critique from a respectable institution?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI PRADEEP JAIN):

(a) and (c) Yes. Sir. As NREGA is not a target based programme, it is not correct to say that only 50% success has been achieved. NCAER-PIF report does not reflect any original estimate of survey done by the organization. Hence, the findings mentioned in the report is not based on its own survey. It refers to selective portions of studies conducted by various other institutions *e.g.* Centre for Environment and Food Security (CEFS) and organizations that may differ in time frame and survey methodology. The findings of CEFS report has been got verified by the State Government of Madhya Pradesh. In most of the cases the findings were not found true. The study conducted by NCAER-PIF mainly highlights the findings of the CAG report on the performance audit conducted by CAG which was for the period 2006-07, the first year of the NREGA implementation. The CAG report has been examined in this Ministry. This report does not highlight any cases of data manipulation. However, the report has mainly focused on the procedural gaps and record maintenance by the implementing agencies because of inadequate staff. Specific instances of anomalies pointed out in CAG report have been shared with the State Governments for corrective action.

(b) Central Government has notified Wage rate under Section 6(1) .of NREGA with effect from 1.1.2009. It takes into account the minimum wages for agricultural labourers as notified by the respective States under Section 3 of the Minimum Wages Act 1948 prior to that date.

Utilisation of funds in Orissa

406. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount released by his Ministry to Orissa during the last three years, scheme-wise and year-wise; and

(b) the percentage of utilisation of Central Government fund by Orissa during the last three years, scheme-wise and year-wise?